



NIHVFC Newsletter November 2004

Contributing to global science development by building careers

Not Just for Federal Employees

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You're a Visiting Fellow. Of course you know about the [Fogarty International Center](#) and the [Division of International Services](#). In addition, NIH has a number of services available to assist employees, but many fellows may not realize these services are also available to them. The following is a selection, with brief descriptions of their services. You do not need to be a federal employee to take advantage of the expertise and resources provided by these organizations.

[Your Institute or Center's Administrative Staff](#). Your IC or Division has specific staff who are the primary source for administrative services in support of your research. They work for you, not only for the investigators, and can help you with benefits, stipends, and other pay-related questions. Your institute may have specific Visiting Fellow provisions. For example, NCI has an Information Sheet for Visiting Fellows, including stipend amounts and benefits on its internal site at <http://camp.nci.nih.gov/public/hr/redbook/VisitingFellow.htm>.

[The NIH Recreation and Welfare Association, Inc. \(R&W\)](#) is not just gift shops and yoga classes. The R&W provides bi-weekly listings of temporary and permanent housing available within the Bethesda commuting area.

[The NIH Work/Life Center \(WLC\)](#) can help you balance the increasing demands of research with personal interests and responsibilities. They are in Building 31 Room B2 B47. WLC has a resource library of job and career development books, audiotapes, and videos. They also hold the "Phases and Faces of Life" and Career Seminars. You can also make an appointment for individual career counseling.

[The NIH Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) provides free and confidential counseling for individuals and groups when personal issues affect the workplace. The EAP provides professional consultation services, assessment, referral, short-term counseling, and follow-up

[The NIH Office of the Ombudsman \(Center for Cooperative Resolution\)](#) is a neutral, independent, and confidential resource providing informal assistance in resolving work-related conflicts, disputes and grievances.

[The NIH Office of Equal Opportunity \(OEO\)](#) assists in assuring that all programs, functions, and activities of the NIH are carried out in compliance with the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity statutes, laws and regulations.

The NIHVFC is a self-governing body serving the interests of visiting fellows in their transition to life after the NIH by working to creating the opportunities for visiting fellows to maintain continuity in their research upon returning to their home countries.

Website - <http://felcom.nih.gov/NIHVFC>

Email - NIHVFC@mail.nih.gov

The Foundation for the Advanced Education in the Sciences (FAES) handles your health insurance but does much more. Every spring and fall, FAES offers a large number of courses, some science-related, some not, including all levels of English and six other languages. Courses are open to government and non-government registrants.

As an aside, several local organizations offer free or low-cost English classes at basic and advanced levels – including the public school systems and community colleges of both Montgomery and Frederick County.

Clinical Research in Vienna, Austria

By Dr. Tirumalai Kamala (NIAID)

For NIH Visiting Fellows involved in Clinical Research, the city of Vienna in Austria may offer tremendous and exciting training opportunities according to the luncheon conference organized by Dr. Philipp Steger of the Office of Science and Technology (<http://www.ostina.org>) of the Embassy of Austria on 29th September 2004. After gracious welcoming remarks by the Honorable Eva Nowotny, the current Ambassador of Austria to the US, the floor was given to Dr. Heinrich Klech, Medical Director, Eli Lilly Area Medical Center, Vienna; Dr. Wolfgang Aulitzky, Medical Director, Confraternitaet Vienna; Dr. Hans-Georg Eichler, Vice-President, Research and International Relations, Medical University Vienna; and Dr. Michael Haupl, Mayor and Governor Of Vienna.

The conference highlighted the training capabilities and expertise in Clinical Research offered by a trio of Viennese institutes namely, The Vienna School Of Clinical Research (VSCR) (<http://www.vscr.edis.at>), The American Austrian Foundation (<http://www.aaf-online.org>), and the Medical University of Vienna (<http://www.meduniwien.ac.at>).

Dr Klech pointed out that the VSCR seeks to close the gap in the education of clinical researchers by offering continuing post-graduate education of physicians leading to certificates and accreditation including Masters degrees with the future potential of even a Ph.D. program in clinical research. Some of the highlights of the programs offered by the VSCR include a contract with the Lancet on a publication workshop. The VSCR is a member of the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership Program (EDCTP; http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/info/conferences/edctp/edctp_en.html) aimed at combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis through clinical research. It is also part of the EU Forum for good clinical practice, and has collaborations with the World Medical Association (WMA), the World Health Organization (WHO).

Speaking about the American Austrian Foundation, Dr. Aulitzky pointed out some of the advantages of linking up with a private foundation, the Open Society Institute (part of the George Soros

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Foundation), which include the ability to offer scholarships to those gifted young medical researchers in Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa, who would not usually be identified through governmental structures. One of the goals of the American Austrian Foundation is to improve local infrastructure for clinical research in countries of Eastern Europe, and Near and Middle East. As a part of this endeavor, the Salzburg Medical Seminars International offers 20 to 22 seminars per year. One of the highlights of these seminars is that the contents are available as CD-ROMs to participants so that they can disseminate and share the information contained therein to their colleagues when they return home. Distance learning is promoted through the creation of Open Medical Clubs where seminar alumni meet, network and collaborate electronically without leaving their countries.

Speaking about the Medical University of Vienna, Dr. Eichler pointed out that the University had the distinction of being the world leader in lung transplants. He said that this achievement underlined the unique cooperative stance of the University that All in all, one left the conference with the impression that Vienna is a center of excellence for clinical research training for physicians from all over the world.

Useful Web sites to note:

- o <http://www.ostina.org>
- o <http://www.vscr.edis.at>
- o <http://www.aaf-online.org>
- o <http://www.meduniwien.ac.at>
- o http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/info/conferences/edctp/edctp_en.html